



PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor: Robertson, S.

Examiner: Fadok, M.

Serial No.: 09/324,601

Group Art Unit: 3625

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Title of Invention: System and Method for Providing Electronic Multi-Merchant Gift
Certificate and Contribution Brokering Services Over a Distributed
Network

Seattle, Washington 98109
May 14, 2004

TO THE COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

SECOND DECLARATION OF STEVEN C. ROBERTSON UNDER RULE 131(b)

Steven C. Robertson declares:

1. I am over the age of 18, and competent to testify in this matter. I am the inventor in this case.
2. At least as early as March 9, 1999 I realized while working in Kent, Washington USA the details of a system for providing an electronic gift certificate service for users over a distributed network. The gift certificate would have a plurality of merchant sites connected to the distributed network, each merchant site running at least one application to provide an online service to users over the distributed network; a plurality of user computers connected to the distributed network, each user computer running at least one application to access the online service at a merchant site; a gift certificate authority site connected to the plurality of merchant sites, the gift certificate site including a user database and a merchant database, each database containing authentication information as to respective users and merchants, the users accessing the merchant sites from the user computers over the distributed network; a database which stores gift certificate data and transaction data related to particular gift certificates; and an authentication protocol for allowing the gift certificate site to authenticate users and merchants.

3. In addition at least as early as March 9, 1999 I realized while working in Kent, Washington USA the details of a method for a user to purchase a gift certificate from an on-line gift certificate service. The method had the steps of: user enters a desired dollar amount to be applied to the gift certificate; user enters a user-selected PIN for authentication in a gift certificate redemption process; user provides payment information to gift certificate site for purchasing the gift certificate; gift certificate site validates user payment information; and user receives an order confirmation, including a unique gift certificate identification code.

4. I conceived of this system and method and reduced this conception to writing in a lab notebook that I have kept. As representative of, and evidence of, my conception and reduction to practice of the invention I claim, I previously attached, in my first Declaration in this case, pages 19-24 and 27 from notebook #1 for this project of mine, with pages dated from 3/9/99 to 3/13/99.

5. I immediately got in touch with Gale Hurley and, over the course of time between 3/11 and 5/9/99, I created work sessions with her to review and discuss the above referred to notebook pages and my vision for the gift certificate system and method, just as set forth above. These reviews with Ms. Hurley were invaluable to me in beginning to flesh out the ideas as I had conceived them, and in testing my hypotheses and proving them valid to my satisfaction, so as to bring them to the level disclosed in my application.

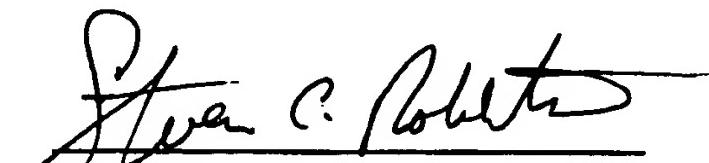
6. In about the middle of March 1999, while I was also still mentally fleshing out my conceptions in discussion with Ms. Hurley, and in other work further described below, I began the preparation of my own patent application on this technology, acting as my own agent. Many of my early draft patent application files and my working data model and data flow diagrams and html prototype pages, as well as object models, mindmaps, user interface designs and the like, created by me in the March to early May 1999 time frame, have since been lost in a subsequent hard drive failure. However, I did continue to iron out bugs in my thinking about the actual

practice of my invention, and to make needed improvements in my patent application right through 6/2/99 when I filed it with the USPTO.

7. What I can document at present that I spent at least the following times on preparation and revision of specification and drawings for the application I filed June 2, 1999 (see attached copy of spreadsheet page used to keep track of my time during that period): 5/21 4 hours on the spec; 5/22 2 hours on the spec, 0.5 hour on diagrams; 5/29 1 hour on the spec, 8 hours diagrams; 5/30 4 hours on the spec; 5/31 2 hours on the spec; 6/1 and 6/2 1 hour each on the spec. I have thus established that I worked diligently on bringing my conceptions to fruition, all as now set forth in my 1999 application, and that I worked on both the practice of the technology and the preparation of my own patent application continuously from my conception in March 1999 until I filed my application in June.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the accompanying application or any patent issued thereon.

DATED May 16, 2004


Steven C. Robertson



2. Gift Certificate